

Brook Kapukuniahi Parker Artist Bio

Brook Kapūkuniahī Parker is an artist of his native Hawaii, raised in Kahalu'u, O'ahu. He is the second eldest of six sons born to David Paul Parker and Patricia M. Kauka Parker. Brook's family roots run deep in the islands being a direct descendant of John Palmer Parker of Newton, Mass., and founder of the Parker Ranch on the Big Island of Hawaii. John Parker's wife, Rachael Keli'ikipikanekaolohaka Ohiaku was a great-granddaughter of Kamehameha the Great and his wife Kanekapolei.

The majority of Brook's art portrays the deep love and admiration he has for his island ancestors. As a little boy, Brook was greatly influenced in the arts by his father David, a gifted, self taught artist and painter, Hawaiian historian, genealogist and writer. As Brook grew older his father's interest became his interest and with no formal art school training, his father's large library of art books, Hawaiian history books & books of other interest became his other teachers. He excelled in the art classes he attended at Heeia Elem; King Inter and is a 1979 graduate of Castle High School in Kane'ohe, Oahu. After high school he attended BYU Hawaii in Laie, then in 1981 served a full time church mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints laboring among the Lakota people in the South Dakota Rapid City Mission. Upon his return home in 1983 and for the next 20 plus years he worked in the commercial paint industry in Honolulu. He left the paint industry for good in 2005 to pursue his artistic endeavors.

In 2009 he started painting in acrylic's and oil paints, prior to this he only worked in pencil and color pens. He is still learning his craft and taking painting lessons when time and money permit. His father David Paul Parker and Herb Kawainui Kane are those he looks up to as far as Hawaiian visual art. Both were very inspirational as he rode their shoulders in his younger years and never would he imagine walking in their footsteps today. His hope is to teach and inspire our youth to develop their artistic gifts and continue to share their aloha visually for our beloved ancestors.

In 2012, For the first time, a piece of Native Hawaiian art was hung in the room where the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs meets, in the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC. The Committee, which oversees legislation relating to American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian groups, was chaired by Senator Danial Akaka, the first U.S. Senator of Native Hawaiian ancestry. The room's walls feature art by American Indian and Alaska Native artists, but until 2012 no work by a Native Hawaiian artist had been featured, according to the Hawaiian Way Fund, which worked with businesses and nonprofits to purchase the piece. The work, a painting by Brook Kapukuniahi Parker entitled "Aha Ula," was hung on Thursday, September 20, 2012 prior to a committee meeting, and is on permanent loan to the Committee.

As an artist, Brook has illustrated numerous children's books for Aha Punana Leo Hawaiian Language Emersion Schools. Other clients include The Hawaii Convention Center, The Kahala Hotel, Four Seasons Resort Hualalai, Disney's Aulani Hotel, 29th Infantry Brigade Readiness Center, Hawaii Army National Guard, Kalaeloa, Hi; Kamehameha Publishing, Kamehameha Schools Kapalama Campus, The University of Hawaii at Manoa and Hilo, State of Hawaii Board of Education, Conservation Council of Hawaii, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale Sanctuary in Maui, Hui Malama o Waimanalo, Bess Press, the Pacific American Foundation, and many private collections in Honolulu and nationally to name a few. Brook is also a respected lecturer and historian.

Commenting on his art Brook writes; "I firmly believe we ALL have been blessed with some God given talent. These talents are diverse and may not be as visible as in being an artist, musician, singer or athlete, etc. Whatever it is, our obligation is to identify those talents we possess, improve upon them and then share them with others. I am very grateful and thankful that I can share my deep love of my ancestors through my artistic God given talents. An illustration is first felt in the heart, visualized in the mind, and eventually out through the hands and on to the paper."

For the past 27 years, Brook has been married to the former Drena-Jo K. Kalani and they are the proud parents of five children, two sons and three daughters, and a new grandson. Drena is an eternal partner and manages the business aspects of Brook's art so he can concentrate on creating! They currently reside in Kalihi, O'ahu.

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